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A British Nurse in Bolshevik Russia

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

MISS MARGARET BARBER, the author of this little book, has been nursing in Russia under the Red Cross from April, 1916, right down to October-November of last year, 1919.

Her narrative is therefore perhaps the first authentic record of Bolshevik Russia which Europe has received from a Russian-speaking English subject who has lived continuously in the "Red" area through the whole of the troubled period. And the fact that this unprotected young Englishwoman is alive and well, that she received no harm or insult in the whole three and a half years during which thousands of miles of Central East and South Russia were traversed, that she witnessed literally no atrocities, and that she left the country against her own will—surely heavily discounts the alarming stories from other and often anonymous sources with which England and the world have been shocked and frightened?

While the fate of Miss Barber was still unknown a returned fellow nurse wrote her father:—"I am almost sure she will be in no danger from the Bolsheviks. She loved the peasants too well for any of them to harm her, and wherever she is the name of Englishwomen will be revered, at a time when we so badly need a witness in that unhappy country." Now that friendly relations between England and Russia seem about to be resumed, it is, again, surely to the public interest that an eyewitness of this character shall be permitted to assure us Russians are human beings still and not criminal lunatics; and that, educationally, "Bolshevik Russia may be the most barbarous country to-day, but her children are having the best opportunity to prove her the most enlightened country of to-morrow."

A. C. FIFIELD.



ARMENIAN SOVIET HOSPITAL STAFF, ASTRAKAN, SEPTEMBER, 1919.

Nurse Barber is wearing the Red Cross. Of this staff of doctors, sisters and orderlies, twelve had had typhus the preceding winter. All are Armenians, mostly from Baku.

A British Nurse in Bolshevik Russia

The narrative of
Margaret H. Barber
April, 1916—December, 1919

*With a Frontispiece from a Photograph of
the Armenian Bolshevik Hospital
Staff at Astrakan
and a Foreword by the Rev. Harold Buxton*

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FOREWORD

THE following narrative commends itself to me by its quietness and by the tone of sincerity which runs through its pages. It is a piece of evidence about the new Russia which those who desire to get the truth cannot afford to overlook.

A genuine devotion to the cause of the suffering and down-trodden kept Miss Barber in Russia these three and a half years. She is always for the "bottom dog." Hence her ardent championship of the Armenians. She came out with our party to Van in 1916. On our return she chose to remain in Russia, working for two years on the steppe by the Urals, tending prisoners of war and Russian peasants. At the general break-up in 1917, when her fellow-workers returned home, she alone remained in Russia, once more to help the Armenians. She tried to get to the Caucasus, but, as she was in Bolshevik territory, she could not go beyond Astrakan.

This book tells something of her year's work there, and of her ineffectual attempt to repatriate the thousands of Armenians still taking refuge in Bolshevik Russia.

HAROLD BUXTON.

96, Victoria Street, S.W.
12th March, 1920.

DIARY OF MOVEMENTS IN RUSSIA

April 8th, 1916.—Left for Armenia *via* Christiania, Stockholm, Tornea, Petrograd, Moscow, Baku and Tiflis, with Mr. Harold Buxton's party from the Lord Mayor's Armenian Relief Fund. Worked as a nurse in a Hospital at Van till

August, 1916.—Van was evacuated on the approach of the Turks, and our party disbanded.

August and September, 1916.—Worked temporarily in the Anglo-Russian Hospital in Petrograd.

October, 1916.—Joined the "Friends' War Victims' Committee" Unit and worked in a village in the Samara Government with them for two years under the old *régime* and during the Revolution and Bolshevik rule.

May, 1918.—Friends' Medical Unit broke up (Russian doctors now being available). Arrived in Moscow.

June, 1918.—Joined Armenian Unit in Moscow for refugees from the Caucasus. Travelled to Petrograd on two occasions staying eighteen days and eight days respectively.

August, 1918.—Left Moscow for Astrakan, with stores for Bolshevik Armenian Hospital for refugees. Worked here for over a year.

October 3rd, 1919.—Joined a Red Cross deputation for negotiating the repatriation of Armenian refugees, which left by motor boat for Baku.

8 DIARY OF MOVEMENTS IN RUSSIA

October 5th, 1919.—Arrived in Port Alexandrovsk. Entertained by "Whites" on the battleship *Kruger*. Treated with suspicion and told we would not be allowed to return to refugees.

October 6th, 1919.—Handed over to the British Mission in Petrofsk.

October 10th, 1919.—Sent by them to Headquarters at Taganrog.

November 1st, 1919.—Left Taganrog for Novorossisk.

November 6th, 1919.—Left Novorossisk for Constantinople.

December 1st, 1919.—Left Constantinople by Hospital Ship, *via* Marseilles and Boulogne for England.

December 15th, 1919.—Arrived home.

APPENDIX

Conditions in Russia—Summer of 1919.

A British Nurse in Bolshevik Russia

By MARGARET H. BARBER

PETROGRAD, 1916

I WENT out to Russia in 1916 with the Lord Mayor's Armenian Relief Pioneer Unit, arriving in Petrograd on April 19th. We waited there for a fortnight on our way to Van, in Armenia. In Petrograd we stayed in a luxurious hotel and were constantly entertained by Armenians, but saw very little of Russian life apart from what we observed on our walks through the town, when we noted the gaiety of the Nevski Prospect, and the well dressed people in the hotels and cafés. We made a tour of the sights of the town visiting the chief museums, churches and shops. We visited the house of a Russian lady where a woman was speaking on Armenia, and I noticed that, though there was every sign of wealth and affluence, the lady herself and her friends were dressed in the quietest manner. The servants behaved as though they were the children of their employer, and a degree of familiarity and affection existed which would have been quite shocking to an English maid. There was no fear of the peasant servant not "keeping her place," as she was quite conscious of her own inferiority to her mistress. This all remained from the days of serfdom.

Although I saw no injustice under the old *régime* I felt a constraint, which may have been caused by the repeated warnings of my friends against making enquiries about

conditions in Russia. The dvorniks or house porters also gave one a feeling of suppression and suspicion. They were very punctilious about all passports, and were said to be Government spies on the look out for suspicious persons holding meetings.

We were shown over a very poor attempt at a free Kindergarten School, with great pride, by some acquaintance interested in it, and when I said, "I thought you did not teach the poor," he said, "We are going to begin, it will all come," in a very impressive undertone.

Religion seemed to play an important part with the people, an ikon being hung in every public and private room that we saw. Those in the large stations had lighted candles before them, and there were shrines in the streets which were always crowded. In the churches the ikons were marvellous, often the whole dress of the Virgin would consist of a mass of seed pearls with real jewels of enormous size. Services were very frequent. The priests had most extraordinarily deep voices. They began a prayer on the lowest note imaginable, and gradually climbed up, by indistinguishable intervals to a great final note nearly an octave higher than they began. Then what seemed like a choir of angels answered them from up in the roof somewhere above the Altar. The priests wore gorgeous and massive cloaks simply stiff with gold.

On my return from work in Armenia in August, I worked for a month in the Anglo-Russian Hospital in Petrograd, nursing the wounded Russian soldiers in a princess's palace on the Nevski Prospect, before joining the Friends' Mission for Refugees in the Samara Government. In these few months things had grown much dearer and more difficult to obtain, and many hotels were closed.

SAMARA

WITH difficulty I gathered together an equipment, and started off with a Quaker doctor for Buzuluk in Samara on October 6th, 1916. On the way we saw many Austrian prisoners. Feeling curious as to what the peasants thought of them I asked one what the Austrian prisoners were like. He answered "The people are good." Our reserved compartment was most comfortable, but the third class and cattle trucks were crowded with peasants who were roughly treated by the officials.

Buzuluk, a small, uninteresting town of mostly wooden buildings, was reached after a journey of fifty-six hours, during which the chief event had been the sight of the Volga by moonlight, a broad, ample stretch of water so majestic that one felt quite awed by it. It seemed like a personality in the presence of which meanness and pettiness were impossible. Buzuluk is on the edge of the Steppe in lovely country. On one side of a river are wooded lanes and a plateau of hills, and on the other a vast plain looking just like the sea. Our destination lay fifty-seven miles distant, across this sea-like Steppe, which had to be traversed by road.

Our work was to be in one of the Zemstvo hospitals, on the Steppe, all of which had been closed, as the doctors had been called up for the war, leaving districts of one hundred square miles entirely without medical assistance.

We had quite a pleasant if tiring drive with three halts for change of horses. This was the only existing travelling or postal arrangement in the district. In the winter lives are often lost when driving on the Steppe. A "buran,"

or snowstorm begins ; the snow drifts and drives, and the track is lost in a few moments. During a buran the church bells are tolled all night to act as a guide to those within earshot, but often the drivers can only leave it to the horses' instinct, and they very often find a shelter and a village while the driver does not know where he is. Many cases which we could not decide were dead or alive were brought to our hospitals after these storms.

Our great difficulty of course was the language, and our interpreter gave the whole staff lessons every evening. I also went into the village every day among the peasants, and soon picked up enough to understand or be understood by them, but I thus got into the habit of only using the familiar " thee " and " thou " of the peasants, and a great many expressions not to be found in the Russian Grammar books ! This later caused such amusement to educated people in Moscow as to be almost embarrassing until I learned to adopt the " you."

The peasants in the village where I worked were very homely and very ignorant ; but aware of their ignorance and eager to learn. They often said, " We are an ignorant people, tell us about your country. Are the people like us or like the Tartars ? "

In this district were many Tartars, but, though they never intermarried, no ill-feeling existed among them. In a ward full of Tartars and Russians I would raise the question of religion, but they would always say in a friendly way, " God is One." Their religion was wonderful, and was not the least affected by the fact that the priest was a scoundrel, and was only induced to minister to his flock by large offers of money, and was discovered with the chief Psalm-singer to be carrying on a secret trade in eau de cologne as a liquid refreshment. There are literally hundreds of " prasniks," or festivals—holidays for all kinds of saints, but the people often cannot even tell you the

name of the Saint they are celebrating, though they go to church and have fasted the night before. They do not know the simplest stories from the Bible, and, if you ask them they say, "I am not educated."

On entering a house the peasant first crosses himself three times before the ikon, a picture of some Saint or the Virgin and Child covered with gilded tin, moulded to represent the clothes and halo, with holes left through which can be seen the face and hands of the picture behind. It stands on a shelf in the corner opposite the door, is adorned with coloured paper flowers and draped with an embroidered towel. A lamp lit on special days hangs before it. Immediately beneath is the family table, on which is placed the heavy samovar, bread, salt and a bowl of cabbage soup, with wooden spoons for each person to dip in with. If any one enters during the meal another wooden spoon is fetched and pressed into his hand, and the best sweetmeat given him to eat with his tea.

The peasantry in many ways showed quite a Communistic spirit. They came and went freely into one another's houses. There was no knocking, and no one was ever refused admittance. They came in and asked for anything they wanted, and beggars always received at least a piece of bread from the poorest of the peasants. They always crowded in in cases of distress, illness, funerals or marriage. They helped one another freely with hospitality, care of children, loan of horses, implements or food, and always combined in their labour in the fields and in the making of fuel.

We were in this village for the Russian Easter. The peasants had kept a long and trying fast lasting for six weeks ; no meat, no milk, no butter ; only sunflower oil allowed ; no singing, playing or dancing ; all in old clothes of faded colours. Then the week before Easter the services began in earnest.

I went to one on the Thursday evening from seven to ten p.m. You bought a candle for five or ten kopeks (1d. or 2d.), and the Evangel (Gospel) was read twelve times (for the twelve Apostles at the Last Supper) with singing and prayers in between. Every time the Evangel was read you lit your candle from your neighbour, who lit his from his neighbour, who got it from someone who had lit his at one of the candles at an ikon. We stood the whole time crowded together, never kneeling or sitting, but some prostrating themselves occasionally. They crossed themselves continually, always thrice in succession, and with no relation to any particular part of the service. This was so exactly suited to the Russian temperament, to simply stand holding a candle, seeing glittering dazzling lights with the gates of Heaven depicted before you. Where our Altar rails would be, all was enclosed, and only the priest went in and out, bringing out the book, the cross, and all the precious things ; and going in again. The doors were of gold, brass, or marble, and set with stones and jewels.

Hearing the tremendously deep-toned voice of the priest, and the choir answering, you fell into a reverie, and, on waking, you found yourself in church and crossed yourself three times. Very seldom did all cross themselves at once. Another feature of the service was the passing of small money (gumless stamps) from one to another back to the desk of the candle-seller, with whispered directions as to price, and the candle with change was passed back by the same hands to its purchaser. The service ended, all walked home with the remains of candles screened in various ways, making a pretty procession.

The great service was on Easter Eve, beginning just before midnight. Some of us decided to go, and I went with a Russian peasant woman so as to get the spirit of it better. The great thing is to have eggs, painted in colours, and give them to your friends.

The church was packed, and the service began at first quietly. At midnight the priest processes round the church in search of Christ, and then says "Christos Voscrece," and the people say "Vo istina Voscrece" (He is risen indeed). The bells began to ring and the singing was beautiful. At 3 a.m. this ended with an interval. People crowded to kiss ikons, and then sat outside on the steps, or inside on the floor, greeting and kissing each other, and saying, "Christos voscrece," "Vo istina voscrece." Then the Mass began, and went on till 6 a.m., the people standing the whole time. The service ended, the priest with the ikons and banners processed round the church, which was railed off from the street, where were spread the wonderful cakes, ornamental bread, and even live cocks and hens, waiting to be blessed and sprinkled with Holy Water by the priest.

It was now about 7.30 a.m., and all made off for home. As I did so I could see in many houses the whole family standing before the ikon bowing and crossing themselves preparatory to a meal of coloured eggs, tea, and Paska cake. They then slept until mid-day when, dressed in new, bright clothes, they walked about, or sat in groups on the ledges built outside every house. The girls wore bright green, yellow, pink or red cotton skirts, with short jacket of contrasting colour, and a flowered handkerchief on their heads of perhaps another bright colour. They looked charming, and went on the Steppe to play singing games all day. The boys had bright coloured shirts and new caps with black shining peaks.

The bells pealed the whole day, as anyone could go up and ring them as they liked. In the evening all went to church. This continued all the week. No one did any work. They sat in the open, greeting one another, exchanging eggs and kissing when they met for the first time. When the week was up all went to plough, harrow and sow the

wheat. It was felt to be wrong to do so before the great Festival was over.

There were no rich landowners in the district, and I had no insight into the life of the upper classes, but the shopkeepers, or those who could afford to go into the towns for education, always adopted a superior and scornful attitude towards the ignorant peasants, much resented by these. They complained to us of their doctors, who would only visit them for large sums of money, and of the sisters, who constantly told them "not to come too near." They showed great surprise when, on the offer of large bribes, our doctors refused them certificates of unfitness for military service. The rich peasants and well-to-do Cossacks were also very much taken aback when we made them wait their turn in the dispensary with the poor peasants. We often visited the Cossacks in cases of illness. These had more land, and of better quality, were more highly educated, and had much finer houses than the peasants. One never saw a poor Cossack ; they always helped one another.

At the time of the Revolution the peasants accepted the change with a mild apprehension and astonishment, accepting the new doctrine brought back by the soldiers. The Cossacks however, threatened to show fight in our district, and the peasants expressed great alarm, declaring that the Cossacks spared no one when they fought. They kept watch for them in the church towers day and night, and were much relieved when they heard that the Cossacks had accepted the new *régime* and decided not to fight. (They subsequently joined the Whites, of course.)

The Revolution affected us very little. We were simply told by the peasants one morning at our dispensary that there was no Tsar, and this was afterwards corroborated by the local paper. The returning soldiers held meetings on the market place, assuring us that the millenium had come, and that we were now all free ; and the Starosta of

the village stuck up a manifesto in the vollost, or town hall, and gave me some copies of it, which I could not read.

Nothing further took place of any importance until starvation was threatening the people of the village, owing to the failure of the crops, when some comparatively well-to-do people in the place were known to be hoarding a supply. These individuals were escorted to the village vollost, and shut up there until they consented to sell their surplus grain. They did so next day. This was the first lesson in Socialism.

The heat of the summer proving very trying, our Committee gave each of its workers a fortnight's holiday, and a hundred roubles towards expenses. My friend and I took ours in August and went by steamer up the Volga, from Samara to Nijni Novgorod and back. We passed Simbirsk and Kazan and reached Nijni on the fourth day. The Volga was lovely, a bright glistening grey colour, sometimes smooth, sometimes rippling like hammered silver.

We were travelling second class, but were able to visit all parts of the boat. There were several rich Tartars, who twice a day spread out their mats, removed their shoes, and said their prayers on the public deck at sunrise and sunset. There was a stall on board where one could buy postcards of the Volga or Revolutionary ones of the Tsar falling off his throne, trampling on peasants, or conferring with Rasputin.

I spent a good deal of the time among the peasants down below. The feeling seemed very pro-war, and pro-English, and anti-soldier deserter; in fact the soldiers seemed rather unpopular with the peasants at this time. They had had hard work without them and had to pay such big prices without the numerous privileges and first places that the soldiers expected. This was during the Kerenski *régime*.

The officers were very friendly towards us, and one said,

"We suppose you are all going home to England, and no wonder. We are ashamed of our country, but what can we do? In the name of Freedom our soldiers refuse to obey us."

Kazan was interesting, as the old Tartar capital. We stayed here two nights with an English lady doctor, who was running a children's hospital. Disappointment awaited us at Nijni, as the great Fair we had hoped to see and had heard so much of was very poor this year owing to the war. We walked along streets and streets of wooden shops and stalls which this year were mostly unused. One or two large brick buildings were like arcades with shops all around and in the middle, and a brass band playing overhead. Here were sold shawls and scarves from Orenburg, stones both cut and uncut from the Urals, metal work, silver brooches, belts, stuffs, carpets and costumes from the Caucasus; just enough to give one the suggestion of what it must have been like in peace time. Chinese were selling silks in the streets, and we saw many Persians about, but did not discover what they were selling.

The most striking thing about Nijni was the lovely view of the town from inside the Kremlin wall, high up on a sort of terrace, the river winding away over a plain to the horizon. We went up at sunset. It was simply splendid, the sky all yellow and red, and the river like a gold thread between grey banks; and nearer, where it broadened out, reflecting the red and yellow of the sky.

During the following autumn the villagers began to suffer from shortage of food. The harvest had proved a failure. The village Soviet tried to solve the difficulty by commandeering flour from the neighbouring homesteads, but this only yielded four pounds per head per month, which of course was not enough to live on for the peasants who had practically nothing else. Some ate for three days and fasted three. Some ate bran, and fed their horses on leaves. The horse

problem was great, for if they sold them they could not plough their piece of land in the spring.

Our Austrian prisoner dispenser and I ran a small scheme of our own to help these hungry people. He, with my wages, bought potatoes and millet (the staple food of Russian peasants), and I looked up cases, giving them a letter to him stating the number and family. He then gave out the food as he thought best. The richer peasants in each street knew who were suffering most as they had been to them weeping and asking for bread. They do not beg, but simply ask one another, and, because of the Russian hospitality, they are never refused. Of course, there was some difficulty in getting the food, but our Austrian was well-known in the village, and the people for whom he had formerly worked would sell him secretly a hundred-weight or two, though theoretically this was not allowed by the vollost. Our Cossack patients also often obliged us. Very little could now be obtained at the weekly bazaar, once full of booths and carts of flour and skins of wolves and sheep. There were, however, still sunflower seeds, which the people chewed all day long; crowds of people, Tartars, refugees, Germans, Austrians, Russians.

These Germans were civil prisoners, of whom there were about fifty in this village. They had been here since the first outbreak of war. There was a pathetic group of very old people, a very old man and four shaky old ladies. These old Germans just sat in a room with their hands folded patiently, in the strange house, in the strange, cold land, of whose language they were too old to learn a single word. They had apparently nothing much of their own but their Bibles. They were simply waiting for the end, or Peace, whichever should come first.

The poor Russian is very philosophical. "Ladno" is a great Russian word said with a tremendous drawl. It means "All right," or "Don't bother." You say it

if told that your clothes are torn ; if there is no more bread, or if someone pays a bill minus a few kopeks ; of if someone wants tea, and the samovar is found to be empty. They will bear all hardships patiently.

The doctors and sisters all now returning from the war, we found we were no longer needed, and decided to go home, or elsewhere, should work open up. The village Soviet presented the doctor, another nurse and myself, with three ikons and an address in appreciation of our work there ; and the authorities in Buzuluk, our nearest town, gave us each official papers asking our " Comrades " in Moscow, or elsewhere, to give us every possible assistance in our work. We left on May 16th, 1918.

MOSCOW AND PETROGRAD, 1918

WE were met in Moscow by Countess Tolstoy, daughter-in-law of the great Leo Tolstoy, who took two of our party to her brother-in-law's, and me to the English governess' home, which was partly supported by the English Church and a rich family of the name of Hasty. It was a most dismal abode of half-starved people. We received, as governesses, the third category which entitled us to one-eighth of a pound of bread a day.

There were three categories :—

- 1st Category.—Children, manual workers, soldiers, patients and workers in hospitals.
- 2nd Category.—Office workers, workers in shops and restaurants and houses, not engaged in heavy work, old people of sixty.
- 3rd Category.—Those not working, those exploiting labour, or speculating, or working for their own profit not in connection with the State.

What made our condition more unfortunate was that the head of it was a foreigner, who took every advantage of the helpless position of these English women, to profit by their ignorance of the language and of the customs of the place. They had come from all parts of Russia and were trying to get home to England, having been thrown out of their employment of teaching the children of princes and wealthy landowners, now unable to employ them. She would hold up the coupons we were entitled to, purchasing food with them at a low rate and charging us a

far larger sum. Those engaged in teaching could not spare the time to go themselves and obtain their supplies with their own coupons. Only one lady did so, and found she obtained a great deal more than the rest.

Coupons entitled one to tea, sugar, bread, butter, meat, dried vegetables and paraffin oil. Those governesses who were giving lessons, and intended to stay during the winter, succeeded in buying flour through some speculator who had evaded the law. Some of the servants also obtained it from friends in the country by some means, and sold it for two hundred or for two hundred and sixty roubles a poud (40 lbs.) to the English ladies.

Owing to the scarcity of bread, the Bolshevik authorities used to search the houses for stores of flour, not allowing any one person to hoard more than forty pounds at a time. The alarm was given that they were searching our district, and several of the ladies who had supplies of flour begged us, who had none, to allow them to keep twenty or thirty pounds of it in our cupboards until the danger had passed. The Red Guards, however, having been told that there were only English people residing there, did not enter the house, but passed on to the next, a house where some German Jew refugees lived in great squalor, but often sold us a few pounds of black bread at four roubles a pound. Here the Bolsheviks found a store of 200 pouds of flour, which they carried off in triumph to the food supply depôt.

The governesses were strong anti-Bolsheviks, always telling stories of the way their patrons had been turned out of their beautiful estates by the peasants. One old lady, who had been nurse to a Count's family, with whom she had lived nearly all her life, was living in the home at their expense, under the impression that the Count would soon be settled again in his own estate, and send for her to go to him. She would always show us photographs of himself and his children, with the proud words, "I took the

Count when he was born." In reality the Count had been murdered by the peasants at the time of the Revolution, and the old lady was kept in ignorance of this for fear the shock would kill her. Her fees were paid to the Home by the British Consul with whom the Count's family had left a large sum of money.

Two other old ladies, however, were paid for by the Church, and were in a state of semi-starvation, as they had no money with which to supplement the exceedingly meagre diet provided in the Home, on which it was impossible to live. I ventured to approach the British Chaplain and the British Consul on their behalf, and also wrote a letter of appeal to Mr. Hasty, the wealthy patron of the Home, telling him exactly what meals were provided by the Home, and showing that it was impossible to live on them. The old ladies were kept in a dark, damp cubicle in the basement of the house, in order that they should not occupy a room that might otherwise be let.

Those of our party who were paying guests at the Tolstoys paying eight roubles a day, as we were, were quite able to live on the food provided. The Tolstoys, of course, complained of the change in their circumstances and the loss of their estates, and introduced us to some princesses who had learned shoemaking to earn their living. The Tolstoys were not working, so they too only received the third category, but the two children received the first category, which entitled them to a larger ration. Here I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Phillips Price, who was also staying with the Tolstoys.

The last of our party, Mr. Reynolds Ball (who has since, alas, died of typhus in Poland), was arranged for by our kind friend, Countess Tolstoy, in her son's room in a bachelors' flat, as the latter was leaving that day for work with the "Starving Children's Society," a splendid society which had existed under the old *régime* and had just been

24 A BRITISH NURSE IN BOLSHEVIK RUSSIA

reorganised under the Bolsheviks. Countess Tolstoy herself also joined them later, and some of our party thought of doing the same. Its object was to open colonies in the country for the children of Moscow, as food conditions threatened to be very bad in the coming winter. The member of our party who was quartered here was my nearest neighbour, as we were both living in side streets which ran into the Nikitskaya, and we went together in search of restaurants, amusements and possibilities of work. Mr. Ball never succeeded in solving the mysteries of his ration card, and, when he did obtain anything, would always insist on sharing it at once with the nearest friend or chance acquaintance. As for meals, he generally favoured the Tolstoy vegetarian restaurant, which was also the meeting house of the Tolstoy society. There was also a stall for the sale of Tolstoy's works. I introduced him to a working man's restaurant, where more substantial meals were served out at half the price, though perhaps at a rather less spotless table. The dinner usually consisted of cabbage soup, and fish and a small piece of bread. One of the restaurants overlooked the Kremlin, and with the river for a foreground it was an exceedingly beautiful sight.

We obtained admission to the Kremlin on presenting our papers from the Buzuluk Bolsheviks, and wandered round the beautiful old churches. The palace is now, of course, not open to the public. It forms the offices of the Supreme Council of the Soviet, and part of it is used as barracks. The sacred ikon over the gate of the Redeemer was fired upon at the time of the Revolution. Near the Kremlin wall in the Red Palace are the graves of those who fell during the Revolution "in the noble cause of Freedom." A somewhat grotesque sight was the statue of some particularly obnoxious Tsar, which had been decapitated, and sat headlessly looking out over the river from its high pedestal.

We were in Moscow for the anniversary of the Revolution. It was a public holiday and this huge Red Palace was packed with people in spite of bad weather. There were processions in the streets headed by Red Guards' regiments, and followed by workers' unions with their Red bands and banners. Speeches were made by Lenin and others, bands played revolutionary songs, and one felt that Bolshevism had got a firm hold on the people when the huge crowd joined in singing the "International" as they dispersed.

The people with whom we came in contact or overheard talking in the streets or trams all seemed dissatisfied and grumbling at the hard times in which they were living. People of the upper classes, recognising me as English, often accosted me in the streets, and expressed a wish that the English would come and help them bring back the good old times, and the property they had lost. I usually told them that they had brought it upon themselves by doing so little to educate and better the condition of the masses, who, in our country, were well educated, well housed and looked after.

A member of the household where I lived was an English girl who was acting as secretary to the British Mission. From her accounts it appeared that it consisted of several young Englishmen, with one of whom I was acquainted, who were taking a fairly easy time in the only luxurious hotel that remained (it was occupied by British and Americans), the "Hotel Elite." Here in vivid contrast to conditions outside, bands played and luxurious meals were served in sumptuous apartments, to these foreigners who were so obviously not in sympathy with Communism.

Whilst I was in Moscow I heard that the Bolsheviks had at last taken over the hotel, and had put the British Mission temporarily under arrest. I met my acquaintance two days afterwards, however, and he treated the episode as a huge

joke, and told me he had made the best of it, and had been allowed to obtain meals from a good restaurant although they had been in captivity. The girl secretary had also been arrested, but had been set free half an hour afterwards. The British Mission then returned to England. Something of the same sort took place with the British Consulate, which had moved into a large palace near the Red Gate at the request of some prince who wished thus to ensure it from being injured by the Bolsheviks.

The British Consulate did not favour the idea of British subjects staying in Russia, but, I was told, could offer no assistance to those wishing to return home, not having the means to do so. They had viséd my passport for England, but, on my arranging to join an Armenian Mission to refugees in the Caucasus, renewed it in order that I might go there.

With a view to looking for work some of our party went down to Orshey on the German Frontier, where thousands of refugees were encamped, being sent gradually over the border into what was now German territory. Here they found great opportunity for sanitary and medical work, but plenty of other doctors willing to do it. I had thought of offering my services, and obtained an introduction through the American Red Cross to Sverdloff of the "Union of Towns," but though he would have given me work, he admitted that there were many other nurses who would readily go in my place.

Meanwhile I had heard awful descriptions of the condition of Armenian refugees who had retreated over the Caucasus to the town of Vladikavkaz, as seen by a fugitive English governess from that town. Having originally come to Russia with a British Unit for the help of Armenian refugees, and been abruptly cut short in our work by the evacuation of the town where we were working, on the approach of the Turks, I felt very eager to go back to their help. So I set off in search of the Armenian Committee.

On producing a paper, showing that I had already worked for them with the Unit brought out by the Rev. Harold Buxton in 1916, they gladly accepted my services, even minus the fund that was then behind us, and I agreed to join a party leaving for Vladikavkaz in about three weeks time.

I could not succeed in persuading our doctor to offer his services, so I was the only English person in the Unit. I saw him off to England on June 20th, 1918, sending a letter by him to Mr. Buxton, telling him of my plans in case he should wish to send any further help to the Armenians by me. This he could not have done if he wished, for almost immediately afterwards all correspondence ceased between the two countries, and it was almost impossible to leave Russia.

My services as a nurse in this Armenian Unit being accepted, I was to receive 300 roubles a month, and 500 down for equipment. I had a great time purchasing everything I could think of for the use of the refugees and myself, buying nearly everything in the wonderful Suchareff market, where I spent nearly the whole day, dining either off hot potato cakes, which were sold there for sixty kopeks, or at the people's restaurant, by standing in a long queue and waiting one's turn. Small change was very scarce at this time, and one had to line up in another queue inside in order to change a "Kerenski" of twenty roubles. On one occasion, when I was very hungry, but had enough change to go straight in (one had to pay before eating), there had been so many beggars begging from the queue that I had to part with all my change before I was admitted, and then had the pleasure of seeing the beggars I had helped enjoying their dinner, while I was still waiting to change my money. By the time I was seated the last piece of bread had been sold.

Working people, who had a larger ration, would bring a

piece of their own bread to eat with their dinner. Needless to say I never had any by dinner-time, and on one occasion a man next to whom I was sitting cut off a piece of his and insisted on my eating it. One could not but appreciate their spirit of *camaraderie* and one easily adopted the custom of calling everyone, man or woman, high official or potato man, " tavarish " or comrade.

In spite of hard conditions and no vodka, a happy spirit prevailed. Bands played in the boulevards, and in the evenings a small sum gave right of entry into pleasure gardens where concerts and ballets took place. My funds, however, were low, and I was unable to indulge in either theatre or opera.

As often happens in Russia, my wait of " a few days " before leaving for work in Astrakan had become little short of three months, and at last I had to complain that I could not afford to live without an allowance for keep. The Committee at once gave me my wages and offered me a room over the orphanage, which I gladly accepted. This made all the difference to me. I had the run of a kitchen so was able to buy fish and vegetables at the market, and cook them myself ; and could make quite a satisfying meal for the same price as I had paid for a very insufficient one at a restaurant. In return for my use of the kitchen I used to go out and buy the milk for the household in the early morning, which was a most amusing experience. The milk-women would arrive by tram from the stations from the country. They had their appointed places where they sold it, and people would lie in wait for the tram, watching for a sight of the peasant woman and her can. If she was seen the tram would be pursued, and the woman surrounded on alighting. The people would form into queues, the first one actually hanging on to the woman herself and conducting her to a place on the pavement where she could sell her milk. She would only sell a quart

to each person, and the price was five roubles. If one were unfortunate enough to be at the end of the queue, and the milk did not last, one had to rush for the next tram. Those who had procured some were always asked by the rest to taste it, and tell them if it was sour. Everybody took the whole proceeding in very good part, but of course the joke was more enjoyed by the young than by the old.

On my announcing my intention of joining the Armenians, the horror and astonishment of the ladies of the English Home was amusing. "Armenians? Going alone? They will illtreat and starve you!" The Consulate also was not exactly enthusiastic. One must allow for different opinions and tastes. The more adverse criticism I heard, and the more I became aware of the prevalent opinion about Armenians in general, the more I felt I must be doing right in helping them. The first thing I could do to help them was to approach the American Red Cross (who I knew had offered special terms to the "Friends" in their refugee work), to induce them to supply material which they were engaged in buying up to prevent it from falling into the hands of Germans. I bearded them in their luxurious den in the only remaining hotel, "the Elite," and they consented to come to arrangements with the Armenian Committee, but stipulated that I must go myself to Petrograd to obtain the goods, as they could not possibly deal with Armenians. My Committee agreed to send me, and obtained for me the necessary Bolshevik pass to travel, and I set off to Petrograd with American papers to the American Red Cross, and Armenian papers to the Armenian Red Cross. All went well, but things are slow in Russia, and I had some time to wait in Petrograd. This suited me very well, as I had been given 300 roubles for expenses, whereas in Moscow, I was living, very reluctantly, on the money the "Friends" Society had given me for returning home. Here, also, I went to the Bolshevik House Com-

mittee myself to obtain my own coupons, and succeeded in getting put on the second category as a nurse. This made life quite bearable ; $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. of solid brown bread a day, costing 11 kopeks, and the option of giving the rest of my coupons into a restaurant, and dining there sumptuously every day at the specially low rate of three roubles. There were a great number of these restaurants, very many people finding it more convenient to dine there and save fuel, and time wasted in shopping and preparing food. If preferred, one could send and fetch the dinner home, which suited families with small children. They were open from eleven till four. I naturally preferred to dine at the restaurant, being more sociable.

About this time there was a terrific outbreak of cholera in Petrograd, and regulations were very strict in these restaurants. All persons had to wash their hands before entering, and no parcel, newspaper or even money was allowed to be placed on the tables. Everywhere warnings to the public were posted up, such as " Do not drink un-boiled water," " Do not shake hands " ; and every restaurant was required to produce, and keep replenished, a free supply of boiled water outside its door. Ambulances were stationed all over the town to convey cases speedily to hospital, and the temporary shortage of hospital workers, willing to expose themselves to the dangers of infection, was met by increase in wages and rations. Public buildings, however, were not closed, and I saw a splendid ballet at the Winter Palace, which was thrown open at the low price of one rouble to any part of the house.

Quite a usual sight in Petrograd at this time was the old Generals selling newspapers. These, as such, being of no use to the Community, found themselves obliged to supplement the exceedingly low rations to which they were entitled, by some form of work, until they attained the age of exemption and received workers' privileges.

A more distressing feature was the beggars in the Nevski Prospect. One particularly painful case that almost haunted me, was a young and very thin girl about sixteen who cried out the whole day, "Sirs, I am hungry! Help me for the love of Christ!" Who could resist such an appeal? I, myself, gave her enough to get herself a dinner and stayed to see her receive even larger amounts from other passers by; but she never moved from the spot, nor ceased her plaintive cry. How she could resist the impulse to go into a restaurant and have a good meal I never could understand, nor her reasons for deliberately starving herself with the means in her possession to buy food. Perhaps a little light may be thrown on her behaviour by the following incident.

Outside a grocer's shop a crowd had collected round a dumb, idiot boy, who was accused by the grocer of begging and trying to steal, although he had been given something. A Militia or People's Policeman, in order to avoid a scene, got the boy into a cab with much difficulty, as he lay on the ground struggling and biting the man's hands. They drove off amid cries from the crowd of "Where are you taking him?" I, too, wondering what they would do to him, and fearing ill-treatment for the boy, jumped on the step and went also. We arrived at the building, on entering which we were surrounded by Red Guards to whom the Militia man told his tale of theft, and showed his bitten hand. The dumb boy could tell no tale at all, but clung to me and shook his fist at the company in general, and the Militia man in particular. I tried to excuse him on account of his starved condition and fright, and begged them to let me take him away and feed him, adding a good deal more that was not complimentary to Red Guards or Bolshevism. They expressed their appreciation of my kind and charitable intention in championing the boy, but explained that it was entirely misplaced. They assured me they were not

so cruelly disposed as I seemed to think. They had tried sending such cases to country homes, where they were well fed and cared for, and allowed a pound of bread a day ; but they always ran away and came back to Petrograd and started begging again. I could only suggest that perhaps this particular boy had not been sent, and began to ask him if he would like to go. At this he began wildly gesticulating, and we understood that he wished to write something. The soldiers provided writing materials and we waited in expectant silence while he scrawled the following words, " If you will take my sister, aged eight, and Mother, who has bad legs, then I will go." " You see," I cried triumphantly, when we had puzzled it out, " this boy is the wage earner of his family. His mother profits by his infirmity, for it makes him a successful beggar. These extreme cases which you have sent to the country have run away back to their families, of whom they were the chief support." The Red Guards were much touched by the little fellow's loyalty to his poor mother and sister, and now talked kindly to him. Then they agreed to write out an order there and then for a pound of bread for him and his sister ; and let him go home, telling me that my offered dinner would not be half so acceptable, as at best I could only get him a plate of soup or dried fish without any bread to eat with it. I was now confident of their kind treatment of the boy, and, apologising for my former hasty accusations of heartlessness, I expressed my thanks to the Red Guards, and left the dumb boy munching his hunk of bread and contentedly beaming on his new friends.

My arrangements were going on quite satisfactorily until one day I went round to the Armenian Committee, by appointment, and to my surprise found the house empty. On enquiring for the secretary, a neighbour exclaimed, " Don't you know ? He's in prison ! " And sure enough the Bolsheviki had taken over the whole Committee, funds,

secretary and all ! I went at once to the American Red Cross to know what to do. " You had better go back to Moscow at once," they told me : " we cannot possibly give you any material now."

I left for Moscow at once, and the first day after arrival went to the Committee rooms to find all the doors sealed up, and the building silent as the dead. What a feeling of depression came over me then ! I cannot express my disappointment and disgust at the action of a so-called Socialistic Government ! Our cause had been purely humanitarian, our funds for the relief of suffering refugees, and they had seized upon them !

Wishing to report myself somewhere, I called on the Armenian priest, who told me it was only too true, and that most likely my services would not be required ; but that he would arrange for me to meet the former secretary on the following Monday, and talk things over.

The next day was a Sunday, and a very dismal day indeed for me. I wandered about, wondering what my fate would be, not daring to spend any of my fast-fading journey money on food, in case, after all, I might need it to return home. The only thing I could do was to go to Church, first to the new Cathedral, a magnificent though modern building, but very crowded ; and later to the Convent on the Strashnaia Ploshad, where the singing of the nuns is so beautiful.

The next day I met the secretary. He told me the fund had been taken over by the Armenian Bolsheviks who intended to do relief work for refugees on an even larger scale, as the Bolsheviks had set aside considerable sums for them. On offering to continue my work I was taken to the new, Bolshevik secretary, who at once accepted my services. He then asked me to return to Petrograd, fetch the stores purchased by the former Committee on the same terms, and take them down to Astrakan. Necessary

passes were given to me to travel, and, after having a good meal, I left that night for Petrograd, July 30th. But so inadequate was the train service at that time that I only just succeeded in getting into a carriage at all, and I spent the whole night in the corridor with many others.

The next morning after arriving I called and found the Armenian secretary already released, the Bolsheviks having discovered nothing incriminating in the papers, and work going on as usual, only now formally under the Bolshevik flag. The only drawback to this was, that, being thus no longer a neutral party, we were unable to get further than Bolshevik territory (Astrakan), and the Caucasus was out of the question.

Within a week I was ready to leave Petrograd for Moscow again, with my stores packed in two railway vans, in one of which I was to travel.

The American Red Cross lent me a young ex-Red Guard as a travelling companion, whom they made responsible to them for the delivery of the goods to the Armenian committee at Moscow.

We expected that travelling in a van would be more comfortable than standing in the crowded corridor of the passengers' coach, but, on opening our van, we were greeted by an avalanche of "lapti," or bark shoes, which had been piled up anyhow on the bales and medicine chests, which they quite covered. We attempted to scramble up and sit on the top of them, but in the process we lost several pairs of shoes out of the door, which had to remain open, as it was the only inlet for light and air. To add to our distress my companion Michael lost a bag containing his rations and Red Cross papers, which had been submerged in the lapti.

It was getting late, so we decided to go off in turn and have a good supper, as a diversion, before we started, and Michael agreed to go first. In his absence I tried to improve matters

in our quarters. I threw all the lapti to the back and corners of the van, leaving a small space by the door with two bales of cloth to sit on, discovering Michael's lost possessions in the process, which greatly pleased him on his return. When I came back from my evening meal Michael was already asleep.

Our train started about midnight, and we awoke next morning to find ourselves buried in lapti, which the motion of the train had caused to find their own level ; so we got up and threw them back hastily, hoping that none had fallen out during the night. This made us hungry, and we decided to get some food and boiling water at the next station ; but all attempts proved fruitless, as our railway van always remained a long way from the platform. At last we became so thirsty that Michael determined to get something at all costs, and at the next station he set off running up the line. The train moved off before he returned, but he had said he would jump on to the end carriage if necessary. But at the next station, when he did not turn up, I found that he had indeed missed the train. This meant that I must remain in the carriage guarding the goods without food or water, as Michael had left me the padlock, but taken the key ! Just then a man from the next carriage came up, and I explained my predicament to him. He arranged matters by producing a padlock and key, locking my van, and inviting me to his carriage, where he and his friend plied me with quantities of bread and butter, and tea with plenty of sugar. They were amused at my astonishment at seeing such plenty, but explained that they were railway men from Siberia, and had been sent on some expedition to Petrograd and back, and had brought from home all their food for the journey. They said that they had fed many hungry people like me, and insisted on my making a good meal.

On approaching a large station we decided to walk up

36 A BRITISH NURSE IN BOLSHEVIK RUSSIA

and down for a few minutes, and, to my astonishment, came face to face with Michael. He had telegraphed (from the station where he had been left behind) for our train to wait for him until another, which he boarded, could catch us up! Such things can be done in Russia! Of course I was very relieved to see him, but regretted leaving my hospitable friends when we went back to our own van. At length we arrived in Moscow and reported ourselves to the Committee, and Michael returned next day to Petrograd.

After another tedious wait of ten days the railway vans were arranged for, and again I set off with my stores, this time to Astrakan.

ASTRAKAN

I LEFT for Astrakan* on August 5th, 1918, in company with an Armenian courier and three Red Guards. The latter had eight days' rations of bread, tea, sugar and dried fish for their journey. I had secured a few pounds of boiled potatoes, most of which I had already eaten at the station, and the courier had one or two herrings. The Red Guards insisted on sharing, in the true Communistic spirit, plying us with bread and sugar, saying that we must all enjoy it while it lasted, and, when it was finished, we would all do without. This seems to come natural to Russians, and the Armenian courier was not slower to take advantage of it than I was myself. Of course we had great hopes of being able to buy bread at the stations we passed. The Red Guards were especially keen to get some white bread, and went in search of it at every station, but found none. I then went out and bought some quite easily. We found that the peasants told the Red Guards they had none in order that the authorities should not know they had enough to sell. They preferred to sell it privately, at a higher price, than to supply it to the Commune at the nominal rate arranged by their Soviet. I therefore did all the purchasing for the party, on one occasion bringing all the bread I could carry in a pillowcase, glad to be able to repay the hospitality of the Guards. There was also plenty of milk and eggs to be bought at the stations. We were a very jovial party, but occasionally the Armenian courier attempted to show a little superiority, when the socialistic spirit of the Guards immediately made itself felt and the

* On the North Caspian Coast.

courier was put in his place. They always treated me with the greatest respect, however, regarding me as their equal, but displaying chivalrous courtesy.

On nearing Astrakan we were passed by a train containing Red Guards and ammunition destined for the new front against the Allies. I spoke to the Red Guards and told them I was British, and asked them to be kind to my compatriots if they should meet any, to which they replied that they were very sorry to be fighting them at all. They then asked if I knew why the British had come to Baku. I said I did not know, but thought (as I did at that time) that they needed oil and petrol for their war with the Turks.

At last we arrived at Astrakan, and the courier went off to report us, leaving us four in charge of the stores. I managed to get a much-needed wash and change of clothes in the meantime, and, on his return, was ready to drive off to the scene of my new work.

The streets were gay with fruit, which was being sold at every street corner; grapes, apples, pears, and melons making a wealth of colour. But, better far to the traveller from Moscow, was the sight of beautiful big loaves of white bread for sale. The population was a mixture of three nationalities, Russian, Tartar and Armenian. Mosques abounded, but otherwise the buildings were of Russian pattern, and the town had a fairly up-to-date appearance in the way of tramways, cabs and motor cars. We came to a large, imposing red brick building, where we alighted and went up some dirty stairs into a passage. The sight of this I shall never forget, for this passage formed a street, and portions of sheets and strips of gay oriental material formed partitions for eight families of Armenian refugees.

We next entered a large hall, every foot of which was occupied by families of Armenians, without any attempt at privacy, simply sitting on the floor grouped round their few personal effects. Only with great difficulty could

one pick one's way among the squatters without treading on a baby or some household god. We then reached a room which boasted seven beds, on five of which were seated five nurses, who sprang up on my arrival, and greeted me, surrounding me, and listening (with amusement at my English accent) to the account of my journey. All assured me there was plenty of work, but said that there was no hospital, and that we had to nurse the people just as they were, on the floor. This sounded quite impossible, but I was all eagerness to begin work ; so one of the sisters said she would be very glad to share her work with me, and promised to take me round her cases in the morning.

We then went into the doctor's bedroom, which did duty for the dining room, and sat down to a dinner of cabbage soup and stew of meat and vegetables, and I was given half a pound of bread and told it must last me the whole day. This seemed to me a huge quantity, as it was four times what I received in Moscow, but I had no difficulty in finishing it ; in fact, when I found that small quantities of bread could be purchased from the refugees at two roubles a pound, I very often supplemented it in the morning, as our ration was often not issued until eleven o'clock.

After dinner I helped a nurse to give soup to three or four families of refugees who otherwise lived on melons, as they had no pot or saucepan of any kind in which to do their cooking. The rest prepared their food at the back of the house in all weathers, improvising stoves with bricks and pieces of stick. This yard was an extraordinary sight when the cooking was in progress ; the Armenian women in their picturesque attire wearing silk scarves on their heads, draped to cover both forehead and chin, and those from the Caucasus wearing Turkish trousers which showed beneath long coats which were held at the waist by a broad sash. Many of these coats and also the headgear were adorned with silver coins or pendent buttons of wrought

silver. They squatted in groups at their work of cleaning fish, baking their curious thin flat bread on concave pieces of iron, or doing the family washing in shallow brass dishes or even washing their children.

They all seemed interested when I told them I was English, as they have a great regard for and faith in the English, whom they consider the most cultivated and civilised people. They were delighted at my attempts to speak Armenian, which I already knew a little, as I had originally gone out to Russia (in April, 1916) with an English Unit for Armenians in the Caucasus, and had worked for three months in Van.

There was one small room in the house occupied by eight families of refugees from Van who were especially friendly to me. They loved to hear me praise the beauty of their land, and they described with regret the farms and stock they had left on fleeing from the Turk. The rest of the refugees were from various parts of the Caucasus and some more recent arrivals were from Baku.

As I had feared, it was very difficult to deal with the sick. One was supposed to take the temperature of any sick persons and then make a round with the doctor, pointing them out to him. He then prescribed medicine or treatment, and one had to pick one's way about administering it. He made another round in the evening, but very often it was quite impossible to carry out all his instructions before they had all turned in for the night. The children nearly all had dysentery, as they practically lived on raw fruit, and there was also much relapsing fever which was extremely infectious, and spread by dirt, which abounded, owing to lack of clothes, and opportunity for obtaining either hot water, or a place to wash in.

I was very thankful when we were able to arrange the top floor as a hospital of thirty beds, with wards for men, women and children, and a bath for all on admission. A

room at the end of the corridor became the dining-room, with part curtained off for the sisters' bedroom, while the doctor had a room to himself. The kitchen also was moved upstairs, and the housekeeper now declared that it was much too small to cook extra soup in for the four families whom we had hitherto supplied. I went to the doctor in dismay, but he referred me to the Refugees' Committee, saying that they were responsible, and that his was merely a medical unit. This Committee was reputed to have plenty of funds, and also had, I knew, all the materials I had brought for the refugees. I therefore visited them daily with various needy cases, demanding some form of relief for them. They generally did something for every one, sometimes giving them a ticket entitling them to fetch a free dinner for their family from some other refugee hostel in the town ; but they arranged no organised help and one had to be continually begging on behalf of some case or other to get any help for them at all.

The Russian organisations were arranged more satisfactorily, and I had occasion to visit them with one or two destitute cases of Russian refugees from the Kuban district who had fled on the approach of the White Army. Any person claiming destitution was required to give a written statement asking assistance, together with a doctor's certificate if unable to work. A meeting was then held which dealt with the cases, giving clothes and monetary help subject to renewal. There were various homes where they could be sent, but if they were at all ill they were supposed to remain in hospital, which was rather a difficulty if the doctors had discharged them as incurable. The clothes were, of course, obtained by commandeering from rich people who had more than they could wear !

I had one case of a young Russian girl of eighteen, who had fled from the Kuban, and had had her hand frozen on the way. When it healed it was so stiff as to be utterly

useless. I took her with a medical certificate to the Committee, who gave her a second category coupon, two hundred roubles a month, and some fairly good clothes. With the recklessness of youth she bought fresh butter at one hundred roubles a pound, and a melon for forty roubles which she could have bought for twenty by standing in a queue. When her money did not last she sold her warm coat worth one hundred roubles (given her by the Committee) for twenty-five roubles, and came to us as a patient through having picked up pieces of melon in the street and tried to make a meal off them.

When discharged again from hospital I accompanied her once more to the Committee, who again gave her money, and were trying to arrange to put her into some institution, when the Reds succeeded in taking the Kuban and she was able to return home.

The Armenian refugees were a greater difficulty. Some were healthy and able to work, and therefore not entitled to assistance if they remained idle, and apart from the difficulty of the language, which restricted possible ways of employment, one had the fact to contend with that the Armenian is essentially a buyer and seller, or speculator, and not a lover of work of any kind. The Turkish Armenian women too were so ignorant and helpless, and are kept, in Turkish fashion, so much in the background in their own homes, that they were often too timid to go out and purchase their own daily food.

The Bolshevik Authorities agreed to give all refugees, as such, second category coupons (which are only intended for workers), whether they worked or not, and all the old people and children received the first category coupons as well as milk tickets, just as the Russian children did. The men soon began to work when they saw the privileges given to workers, and the Armenian boys, true to type, made money by buying fish with their coupons and selling

them dearly in the streets. They also walked out to the country or went down to the barges on the Volga and bought nuts or fruit and sold them at the street corners at great profit to workers who had not time or inclination to fetch them themselves. They also went to the town stores, which opened early in the morning and sold fruit and vegetables at cost price in small quantities. Here they would buy all they were allowed, and sell them later in the streets to well-paid workers who did not care for early rising or standing in a queue. Grapes they bought at nine roubles the pound and sold at twenty during the day. Of course this petty speculation was against the law, and the Red Guards would sometimes reduce the exorbitant price demanded, and stand by until the goods were sold. But this did not happen every day to wary Armenian boys !

In November, when our hospital had been open for nearly three months, we were suddenly informed that the authorities needed our building, giving us nine days in which to move out. This came as a great shock to us and to the refugees below. As many as possible of the wealthier refugees were induced to hire rooms in which to live, thus leaving more room for the poor ones in the free hostels provided. But the hospital was a difficulty. Our doctor had to obtain official documents and walk into all likely private houses until he found a suitable one to "commandeer." But it meant that we were without a hospital for nearly three weeks.

Just at this unfortunate time a thousand fresh refugees arrived from Baku and Petrofsk, in a most deplorable condition of ill-health and starvation. The English had left Baku, and the Turks had returned. At the time of their arrival I had just been visiting our refugees, who had been moved into a large barracks outside the town and were complaining bitterly of the cold. As I left them on that bitterly cold November evening I met the stream of

new refugees wending their way to the barracks I had left. There were a few who had hired conveyances for themselves and their possessions, but others were carrying rolls of bedding on their heads, or even in some cases, had unwrapped them, and wore them over their shoulders to keep out the cold. One young man, apparently alone, was holding his padded quilt round him in place of a coat, without a hat or any footwear whatever. Tired women, carrying one child, dragging another, and followed by others carrying various possessions, passed me in a dreary procession. At the sight of the building they uttered ejaculations of thankfulness and eager anticipation of comfort which I, alas, knew they would not find. Indeed, I dreaded to think what their sufferings would be in this town already so closely rationed, so overpopulated and so short of fuel and clothes.

I described what I had seen to our party, and the head doctor decided to go with me next day and distribute clothing and visit any sickness, if necessary. We found that they had been two weeks on board an open barge, that many had had no provision of food during that time, and that over a hundred had died of hunger, illness and exposure on the way.

We distributed the clothing as well as we could, but, unfortunately, I had purchased very little warm material in Petrograd, as we then thought our work would be further south, where the cold would not be at all intense. We hoped, however, that by supplying each refugee with a piece of soap and a change of underlinen we were giving them an opportunity for personal cleanliness, but found that, owing to the cold, they merely put on their clean shirts over their dirty ones, and made no attempt at washing. This was the more alarming as we discovered that more than fifty per cent. of them were down with typhus. Some had died on arrival and had not yet been removed; some were dying; some delirious, and none had anything to eat.

At the sight of a doctor and nurse they clamoured for food, for medicine and for the sick to be taken to hospital. We did our best to get the Russian hospital to take them in, to make arrangements for feeding them, for tending the sick, and for burying the dead. The doctor and I returned at four o'clock to our dinner exhausted and overwhelmed with the conditions we had seen.

The doctor now redoubled his energy in endeavouring to secure and open our new hospital with all possible speed, and deputed a lady doctor to visit next day with me, we taking with us a parcel of medicine, chiefly in powder form ready made up into doses, and about ten quarts of milk, which we still received for our hospital although it was closed. The task seemed hopeless. Out of five hundred and fifty refugees fifty could be said to be in good health. Their diet consisted of half a pound of black bread and raw vegetables, which they had not the means of cooking. All begged for milk, and it was almost impossible to know which cases needed it most when all needed it so much. I finally gave it out in half glasses to those in high fever, and to the motherless infants, to the bitter disappointment of the rest.

The barracks were a good distance away and the weather was very wet and cold. The sick were in the most awful condition of filth and literally alive with lice, so it was almost impossible to prevent these getting into our clothes. From one or other of these causes, or perhaps all combined, after visiting the barracks with milk and medicine six days in succession, I fell ill with relapsing fever, and, after a week, was myself conveyed to our newly-opened hospital. As soon as I was well I took charge of the women's ward. Nearly all the first cases died almost as soon as we could get them into hospital. One poor woman, whose husband had died in the barracks, came in ill, bringing her sick infant and a boy of about six who was suffering from dysentery. On her arrival it was found that the baby

46 A BRITISH NURSE IN BOLSHEVIK RUSSIA

had died in her arms on the way to hospital. Her little boy died a week later, which fact we kept from her as long as we could. Ultimately she died also, leaving a young girl of sixteen alone to mourn the loss of her home and father, mother, sister and brother.

Many of the sick died in hospital, but others recovered. Orphans were received into the orphanage, regular food was supplied to the barracks, and a kitchen arranged to cook it in. Those with money enough made every effort to find other lodgings away from this hotbed of disease; others were able to find employment, and thus the winter passed, but not without carrying off a heavy toll of victims from the unfortunate Armenian people.

Among our hospital staff of twenty there were fourteen cases of typhus, which included all four of our doctors. We were lucky in only losing one case of our personnel, a dear old Armenian woman who acted as ward maid, and whom everyone called Mother. She had nursed me most devotedly.

I now had time to enjoy and study the life in Astrakan. I was greatly struck by the keenness shown and opportunity given for all kinds of education and self-improvement.

The shortness of the work-day enables the worker to pursue some study in his spare time. Offices close, and schools open at 4 p.m. The Workers' Clubs, which are open and free to all members of any Workers' Guild (and every branch of work, whether manual or mental has its Guild) are well furnished houses with lounge, restaurant, reading-room and lecture and concert room in the same building. Thus all workers are attracted by it, and go to meet their friends after work-hours. Posted up, both inside and outside the Clubs, are the Lectures which are going to take place that week; and the workers, choosing the subject which interests them, make up parties with their friends to attend them.

Study Circles for drawing, dancing, elocution or acting, or for technical subjects, are arranged there, the workers putting down their names for a course. Concerts and social evenings are also frequently arranged, and a children's department on the same lines is carried on in connection with the clubs.

The workers pay nothing for their Clubs, but they pay a monthly subscription to their Workers Guild of $1\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. of their wages, which membership gives them the *entrée* not only to these Clubs, but into any college or university absolutely free of charge. During medical, scientific, or other training, the students are paid for their practical work and receive workers' rations and privileges; thus to encourage trained work as much as possible.

Persons, however employed, capable of giving instruction are encouraged and paid to give lectures and take classes after four o'clock, when their regular work hours are over.

The Cinema also has taken on a far more educational tone in Russia than in this country, and thus education is both popularised and popular. Educational excursions are also arranged in connection with the Clubs.

My fellow nurses were especially keen on joining the study-circles for singing or dramatic talent connected with them, but the language was somewhat a bar to my interest in this.

Sociology plays a great part in the education, the works of Karl Marx, Leo Tolstoy and others being widely read. The child is brought up to feel his importance to the Commune and to look forward to the day when he will begin to take part in the work for the common good.

Bolshevism certainly has an ideal side, which its present system of education is fostering. Bolshevik Russia may be the most barbarous country to-day, but her children are having the best opportunity to prove her the most enlightened country of to-morrow.

The children under Bolshevism receive all the privileges of a worker without working, up to the age of sixteen. Their coupons entitle them to more and better food than workers. All food which is scarce at the present time, such as chocolate, cocoa, milk and sweets, are obtainable only by children's tickets. Free children's performances are often given in the theatres, when the children themselves take part. They have their own Children's Study Circles for dancing, acting, reciting, singing, besides their education. There is no corporal punishment; the child has no awe of his teacher. The position is rather this: the child is there because he wishes to learn; the teacher is merely serving the Community by teaching. The discipline of our schools is practically non-existent, self-discipline is what is aimed at. The child is a very independent person, he knows his value to the State; he knows he is entitled to the opportunity of learning anything he chooses, and he will probably have enough pride not to wish to remain in more ignorance than his fellows. Therefore he goes to school, not because he must, but because he wishes to learn what others already know. The keenness to learn was remarkable in all ages and classes. The illiterate workers were especially eager to learn to read and write. Libraries and teachers are now being established for them in all the villages. Those who had received elementary education under the old *régime* attending lectures on history and literature, and the former intelligent bourgeoisie eagerly taking up or continuing their studies as medical students, engineers or in other professions. You could hardly meet with an individual who was not pursuing some study in his leisure hours. Any person able to give instruction was in great demand. I myself, as an Englishwoman, was requested by pupils to offer my services to their school as teacher of English. It is permissible to hold two posts simultaneously, receiving full wages for the first post where

seven hours a day are put in, and half wages for the second. Thus many people are encouraged to take classes or to give lectures, which facilitates all kinds of education.

In the supply of produce there were two great difficulties. Firstly, Transit. The enemy on every front necessitated the use of railways for troops, supplies and ammunition.

Secondly, the "Sackmen." The Communistic system of buying food at a fair price and selling it to the town consumer at the same price or a little higher to cover transit was continually upset by the fact that the ever decreasing idler, and the alarmist in fear for the future, tried to purchase a private supply of flour. He was ready to pay a hundred per cent. more to obtain his extra supply than he was required to pay for his ration. This left a margin for small speculation, and the "mishokchiks," or sackmen, were continually at work, evading the law and bringing sacks of flour from the country. The peasant readily disposed of his produce at a high price to these speculators, hiding it from the representatives of the official supply. Thus a vicious circle was created, as the more the sackmen succeeded, the less the commune could supply per head to the community. To put a stop to this the sackmen were constantly being relieved of their sacks by the Red Guards, but, as their profit was so enormous, they could take the risk. They bought for 260 roubles per poud (40 lbs.), and sold, for 2,600! therefore speculating though against the law, still existed to a certain extent. On a very small scale it was winked at by the authorities, and the poor profited by it.

Take the case of a woman with children. She had coupons which entitled her to sufficient food and clothes, but no wages to buy them with, unless she liked to leave her children in a crèche and go to work. What did she do? She bought all the food obtainable by her coupons at the very low price demanded, and sold what she could do

without to some wage earner who wished for extras. A child of one year could not possibly consume its ration of fish, meat, fat, or even bread, as it obtains as much as a working man, with the addition of milk, sweets and chocolate. To have an old mother or an afflicted person who was unfit to work under your roof was thus a great advantage. She had a full worker's coupon and would go out early and obtain your fruit and vegetables for you at the Town Stores at less than half the price!

The Church was looked upon somewhat as a refuge for those who would rather profess Christianity than live up to it. They considered church-going not necessary to salvation, and not necessary to the Commune. Those who wished to patronise it must support it. It was dis-established. The Commune was international and must not favour any particular church at the expense of another. However, extra rations and holidays were still given at the time of great feasts, Mahommedan, Jewish and Christian. If priests have been killed, they have been killed as contra-revolutionaries and not as priests. It is felt that the church played a great part under the old *régime* in keeping the people quietly in ignorance.

A Bolshevik wedding was a cut and dried official affair at which was sung the International Anthem, as it was also at civil funerals. If the Workers' Union chose to process with their banners for their comrade they could do so. Military funerals always had processions. The coffin was covered with the Red Flag, the usual firing at the grave took place, and the International was sung. Weddings could also be solemnised in church if desired. Divorce was obtainable by mutual agreement, without having to prove guilt of either parties. There were no wills or heirs, all money at death reverting to the State.

Housing was arranged by House Committees, which investigated the number of rooms in the town, and, comparing

them with the number of inhabitants, allotted them accordingly. Each individual was entitled to at least one room, with share of sitting-room. The single people owning large houses were obliged to allow others to share them.

The inadequate supply of clothing in Astrakan was closely rationed. Each member of the Community had a book of coupons with a slip marked with the date and number of the shop where so many yards could be bought if required. This happened three times during the year I was there, and the number of yards obtained was five. Boots, shoes and galoshes were periodically issued, but also in insufficient quantities. So many pairs were issued to each House Committee, which was expected to assign them to those of the inmates who were most in need, but it generally ended in drawing lots. I was never lucky enough to win, so had to buy mine second-hand in the market.

Special encouragement in the way of wages and rations was given in Moscow to prospective medical students to meet the demand for doctors, no charge of course being made for tuition. Two members of our unit in Astrakan left us for this purpose. All hospital workers were well paid, and the rations were higher than in other departments to safeguard the health of the personnel, especially in infectious hospitals. Better quality food was issued for hospitals according to the number of serious cases ; rice, white bread, chocolate and cocoa being unobtainable elsewhere. On dismissal from hospital, post typhus or other severe cases could obtain a larger ration for the period of one month. Doctors' certificates declaring patients unfit for work would entitle them to workers' rations without working, and monetary help if desired. Special foods could also be obtained through doctors' certificates.

The inadequate railways were almost exclusively needed for military purposes and transport of food products.

Ordinary civil travelling was very difficult, sometimes entailing a wait of several days for a ticket entitling one to travel in a truck. But if any "Communitistic Reason" could be trumped up and one could get oneself "Comman-deered," it was easy to get a pass entitling one to a place, if not to a seat, in a carriage. Our sisters were commandeered "for educational purposes" when they left for Moscow to continue their studies as Medical Students.

I never saw drunkenness in Bolshevik Russia, as the only alcohol is a very small allowance of methylated spirits substitute for hospital purposes, which is only obtainable through the application of the head doctors of hospitals. A little light beer is also occasionally obtainable for sick by means of doctors' certificates. Other people could not secure any alcoholic drink whatever.

The women were on an absolutely equal footing with the men, by whom they were much respected and looked up to. They were freely admitted to the Soviets, where they made speeches of much influence with great confidence. They could hold all positions, including that of Kommisar.

Every group of workers had its branch of the Soviet, at which any member could voice his opinion and elect delegates to the larger Soviet, these again electing delegates to the Moscow Central Soviet. Local organisation was arranged by the local Soviets, larger issues only being submitted to headquarters.

It is a very good thing for Russia that all officials are now elected to office by the workers, and as easily withdrawn by them, since under the old *régime* the official conscience was practically non-existent, and bribery and corruption universally prevailed. Now, on a proved charge of bribery, an official is deposed and another re-elected by the workers.

The system of distribution of commodities was worked, roughly, by the sending of officials to confer with the local

Soviet for the purchase of goods, deciding with them a price sufficient to encourage production. The commodities were then brought by them into the towns and distributed at the price agreed.

During this time we used to watch the enemy aeroplanes coming over Astrakan and dropping bombs. These caused fires sometimes, but they were soon put out by the fire brigades. The aeroplanes turned out to be British, and called forth great admiration for their fearless daring when fired upon and chased by Bolshevik aircraft. But as the British could always fly higher than the Bolsheviks, and so drop bombs upon them, the fights were discontinued.

Our Armenian refugees thought the British were coming to their rescue, but the effect on the general public was the immediate popularity of the Bolsheviks. An educated member of our Unit, hitherto not much of a Communist, exclaimed, "The Bolsheviks are at least our own people. We must support them at all costs against the foreign capitalist!"

No animosity however, was shown to me as a Britisher, I suppose because I was not a capitalist. Besides, feeling is no longer national but international. They firmly believe they are fighting only against capital, and they therefore show no hostility to actual officers or soldiers of the enemy, as they think they are only fighting them out of ignorance. This is what leads to their efforts in propaganda.

With the coming of spring and the breaking up of the ice, the typhus died down, fresh fish and more milk became obtainable and hope rose high with the refugees that they would now soon return home. The British were reported to have retaken Baku and conditions there were thought to be good, and living cheap. The British were also said to be in favour of the repatriation of the refugees, and to be assisting them to reclaim their abandoned possessions

54 A BRITISH NURSE IN BOLSHEVIK RUSSIA

on their return. Some of the refugees actually had such faith in the support and sympathy of the British that they daily expected a British ship to come and call for them from Baku. Not only did no ships arrive, however, but the Bolsheviks refused to issue permits to refugees wishing to return home. Many risked mines and patrol boats and escaped, but few of these were heard of again, and many were caught and sent back.

Our head doctor begged, on medical grounds, that one barge load of two hundred sick might be allowed to pass. This was actually agreed to by the head Kommisar of the permit department, but before he had actually signed the document he was turned out of office by the Soldiers' Soviet for having condemned to death several of their officers as contra-revolutionaries, whom they did not consider guilty. His successor could not be persuaded to sign the document. The Refugees' Committee did not give up hope, and at last the Bolsheviks agreed that a Red Cross deputation might cross the lines to the Whites, and allowed the Refugees to send three representatives. This deputation was to proceed to Baku to try to negotiate with the British and other authorities for the repatriation of the refugees to Baku and the Caucasus on terms of exchange, and to return within fourteen days. At the request of the Refugees I joined the deputation, so the party consisted of three elected refugee delegates, a Russian doctor, two Russian nurses and myself.

PETROFSK, TAGANROG, CONSTANTINOPLE AND HOME

WE left Astrakan on October 3rd in a small motor-boat under an enormous Red Cross flag. Crowds of refugees, giving us letters and messages to their relations, saw us off, and begged us to do our utmost for them, some quite expecting that I would be able to induce the British to send ships to take them home. At least two of the delegates openly expressed relief on finding themselves in neutral waters, as they were wealthy owners of the Baku oilwells, and as such were contra-revolutionary suspects. Voyaging southward on the Caspian, we were two days and nights out of sight of land.

Our small boat proving inadequate, we put into Port Alexandrovsk, hoping to be towed from there to Baku. On entering the harbour we were hailed by Cossacks on a barge, who were acting as patrols. On stating who we were they advised us to moor our boat beside them for the night as it was late, and go to the authorities in the morning. They received us very affably, apologising that they had just finished their evening meal. We accordingly prepared our soup and they joined us and asked us many questions about life across the line. I asked if there were any English in the port. They were uncertain, but showed with pride their English rifles, and said, "We could not do much without them."

Next morning they accompanied us into the harbour. We were here boarded by an officer from a White battle-

ship which was manned by Russians in British khaki. Finding that our party included a British subject, they requested me to go on board the battleship with my kit, on the invitation of the Russian Commander. In thanking the Commander, I asked if he would invite the old Armenian delegate in my place, as he was suffering from the voyage. He refused, explaining that he could not let any of the rest leave the boat as they were dangerous Bolsheviks, but only myself as I was a Britisher. I explained that we were all Red Cross delegates from the Armenian refugees, and tried to interest the officers in our mission. They said they could not recognise us as Red Cross as we had come from the Bolsheviks, even though I protested that the doctor, sisters and I had been working under the Red Cross long before the Revolution. They used such vindictive expressions as to the fate they desired for all Bolsheviks, including my friends, that I reproached them for their bloodthirstiness and told them I thought that they must have frightened the English, who had evidently fled, leaving their uniform and battleships behind them! The Commander hastily assured me that I should see the British in the morning.

The dinner that night was served in great style and plenty, with abundance of wine, and I received very disagreeable impressions before I excused myself and went to bed.

Next morning, on reaching Petrofsk they telephoned to the British Mission, and at last, finding myself with a British officer, who asked me about my experiences, I freely related them. I then told him of my impressions of the White officers, and asked why the British were helping them to fight the Bolsheviks. He replied that they were fighting the Bolsheviks because they committed such atrocities, and seemed surprised at my not having seen or heard of any, and recounted those he had heard. He told me how

serious my situation was and of the extreme hostility of the Whites to possible Bolsheviks, and that they were suspicious of me for working in Bolshevik Russia and wishing to return there. He said there was no chance of my being allowed to go back, and that he would send me to Taganrog, the military headquarters.

At my request he obtained permission for me to visit my friends next day. They were all in one totally unfurnished room together, sitting on the floor amongst their kit—doctor, sisters, delegates and captain of the motor boat. An armed guard on duty outside the room entered with me. They were not allowed out. I described their treatment afterwards to Commander Watson, begging him to try to use his influence to better their condition, as I felt so humiliated at such treatment of Red Cross sisters.

Within a few days I was sent to Headquarters at Taganrog with a Naval Lieutenant who handed papers about me to the Military authorities. I was shown into an apartment in which there were about ten officers of high rank, amongst whom I remember noticing a General and Naval Captain. They at once asked me why I did not wish to go home to England. Surprised, I denied that I did not wish to go home, and said that I wanted to return to the refugees, whose deputy I was, and to whom I had promised to go back; failing this, I was only too desirous of returning home. I was next taxed with having seen no Bolshevik atrocities, and as I could think of nothing bad to tell them except shortage of food, I felt myself an object of great suspicion.

At length they arranged for me to go to the British Hospital, where there was an English nurse. Here I was examined and found to be extremely thin, and was told I must feed up, which I was nothing loth to do. They told me it would be about three weeks before I could go home, so I obtained permission to help the sisters in their work,

58 A BRITISH NURSE IN BOLSHEVIK RUSSIA

and was quite happy nursing the British soldiers, until I overheard a conversation between a convalescent officer, invalided home, and an M.O. The former was declaring his intention of going to the War Office to incite them to send more troops against the Bolsheviks, and the latter advised him to take with him two Irish girls who had come through the line with stories of atrocities in Kieff, using the expression, "They will be a valuable asset." I now feared I might be kept indefinitely waiting, not being "a valuable asset," so I daily visited Headquarters asking to be sent home.

After three weeks I left for Novorossisk, in company with an M.O. and his wife. Here we went straight on board ship which, however, had not quite finished unloading her cargo of ammunition and twenty-nine tanks. We left for Constantinople on November 5th.

On reaching Constantinople an M.O. came on board and enquired personally of the ship's captain (Merchant Service) if there were anything peculiar about me, and what opinions I held. He answered that there was nothing peculiar, but that from what he knew I had modern ideas, as I think he also had himself. The M.O. told him to give me the tip to say nothing of Bolshevism whilst at Constantinople if I wanted to get home. He accordingly warned me that evening.

The next morning another M.O. came to fetch me from the boat, and sent me by ambulance to the British Military Hospital. Here I was received in a private ward like a grave invalid, my health being enquired into by numberless sisters and examinations being held by two doctors. Almost every day I was cross-examined by various Staff Officers as to what I had seen in Bolshevik Russia. I answered truthfully, but said as little as possible. After a particularly searching visitation I remarked to my nurse, "I seem to have fallen into the hands of the British."

This remark was reported. I was kept under constant supervision day and night, and only got out in an ambulance to see the town after repeated requests.

At last, after three weeks, I left by hospital ship for Marseilles as a "Sick Sister." On board I forgot my troubles, being under no supervision. As I left Astrakan in warm weather, expecting shortly to return thither, I only had very light clothing. I should have had to remain in my cabin but for the kindness of some nurses, and also of a sergeant, who clad me in a warm jersey. All went well until we embarked at Boulogne, when, others presenting papers, of which I had none, my name was enquired, and on my pronouncing it, a look of intelligence came over the face of the officer, who said to another, "Yes, I know, her papers are *confidential*." This was rather alarming, as the same expression was used for the mental cases.

On the hospital train at Dover I was told that I was destined for Millbank Hospital, which, however, proving full up, I was sent to Woolwich, where the rest of the sick sisters had gone.

Next day the M.O. examined us and said he had received no papers about me and asked me what my illness had been. I explained that I had come through the lines, and was being sent home nominally as "debilitated." Asking if I had relatives, I said I hoped I had, and wished to communicate with them. He thought it a good move, though he said I could not leave until my papers arrived. I sent a telegram at once to a member of my family (by an orderly), who came that evening, and, finding me in the best of health, succeeded in inducing the authorities to allow him to take me home then and there, pointing out that I was not a military, but a civil nurse, and leaving his address in case of need.

It is sad to think of those banished Armenians in Astrakan still longing to return to their homes, and wonder-

60 A BRITISH NURSE IN BOLSHEVIK RUSSIA

ing why I have not kept my promise to come back to them.

This I am prevented from doing ; nor can I send them any message.

I fear their faith in the British must be shaken.

APPENDIX.

CONDITIONS IN RUSSIA—SUMMER OF 1919.

PRICES.

Taganrog. <i>White.</i>	Astrakan. <i>Red.</i>	
(No coupon system)	(with coupons)	(without coupons)
Sugar, 60 roubles lb.	5 roubles.	160 roubles.
Bread, 3.50 roubles lb.	.50 „	30 „
Material, 100 roubles yard.	13 „	150 „
Boots, 1,500 roubles.	300 „	1,500-2,000.

WAGES (*per month*).

<i>White.</i>	<i>Red.</i>
Hospital Nurses, 300 roubles.	2,100 roubles.
Unskilled Work, 250 „	1,900 „

ATROCITIES.

None actually seen.

<i>White.</i>	<i>Red.</i>
Accounts given by White peasants in Taganrog of cruelty of Denikin's Cosacks (on taking towns and villages) to supposed sympathisers with Bolshevism.	Frequent shooting of revolutionary conspirators on discovery.

DRUNKENNESS.

<i>White.</i>	<i>Red.</i>
Actually witnessed—6 naval officers on duty ; 2 British soldiers drunk and accidentally shot by drunken Russian officer.	None seen. Strong drink prohibited.

CHURCHES AND THEATRES.

Both White and Red open.

62 A BRITISH NURSE IN BOLSHEVIK RUSSIA

SCHOOLS.

White.

Elementary Education as before in Russia. Advanced Education practically non-existent.

Red.

Every facility for free Elementary and Advanced Education.

PRISONERS.

White.

Cold, dirty, and without boots, but supplied with British clothes on joining the Volunteer Army.

Red.

None seen. A personal acquaintance was deputed to conduct two British officer prisoners to Moscow Internment Camp, where prisoners were treated like Red soldiers, and allowed freedom.

FEELING OF THE PEOPLE.

PEASANTS.

White.

A readiness to "jump with the cat," and a longing for peace.

Red.

A longing for peace and plenty under any Russian rule.

EDUCATED.

White.

Great interest in affairs in Moscow and Petrograd and in the condition and point of view of the "intelligenza." A longing for peace.

Red.

A spirit of suffering for a good cause. A growing allegiance to Russian Communism rather than foreign intervention. A growing preference for the Communal rather than the Capitalist system.

PROGRAMME.

White.

Red.

Uncertain. Capitalism and foreign exploitation to be encouraged and the working class to be put back into its proper place.	Marxist Communism. Equal rights for all. Capital to be owned by the State. Internationalism.
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FEELINGS OF HOSTILITY.

ARMY.

White.

Red.

Feelings of hostility expressed against all Red Guards, Commissars and any from Bolshevik Russia not actually telling tales of atrocities.	No hostility expressed about actual soldiers or officers, as it is thought that they do not know why they are fighting.
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PEOPLE IN GENERAL.

White.

Red.

Very little expressed, but a certain feeling of mistrust of Capitalists. (British officers in South Russia overheard the expression from a group of peasants "More Capitalists.")	Hostility to Capitalists and Speculators expressed by all classes.
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STORIES OF ATROCITIES OF BOLSHEVISTS

are given as the justification of Allied intervention.

1.—Terrible atrocities have been committed by Denikin's and Kolchak's armies, the latter witnessed by members of the Friends' Unit, who went home *via* Siberia, and the former described to me by White peasants.

2.—Many atrocities attributed to the Reds were not committed by them at all. For instance :—

The Petrograd atrocities of the first Revolution.

The Odessa atrocities, committed by a band of mountain brigands, commonly called Green Guards, neither White nor Red (second-hand information).

There are instances of advanced Guards of Cossacks taking the towns from the Bolsheviks in their customary brutal fashion. On being followed up by the Volunteer Army the conditions were described and photographed, and the horrors attributed to the Reds (evidence of British officer).

Atrocities are therefore committed by both sides, and do not in themselves justify the support of either party.

THE END.

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